

From: Brown Pete F NSSC  
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2002 10:31 AM  
To: #NSSC ALL HANDS ONSITE  
Subject: All Hands #329: Update on Resolution of Mold Problems in Building 197 WNY

Folks

As you may know, we have been working with NAVFAC, PWC and Turner Construction, the construction contractor for Building 197, to address a mold problem on the 5th floor. To date, four areas on the 5th floor were identified as containing mold - the first area was at a column in the north west corner; the second area was at the west center near and in offices 1750 and 1754; the 3rd area was in the east center near and in offices 2160 and 2150; and the 4th area was at a column in the east side of the building. Also, on 13 March, some suspect mold was discovered on a column on the first floor of Building 197 in office 1E1600.

Molds can be found almost anywhere; they grow on virtually any substance, providing moisture is present. There is no practical way to eliminate all mold and mold spores in the indoor environment. Molds found in buildings usually do not cause serious illness among healthy individuals. However, molds may cause allergy type symptoms among exposed persons.

Samples taken in the above-referenced areas showed the presence of a mold called *Stachybotrys*. This particular mold has recently received much media attention. Investigations into the matter by the Center For Disease Control/ National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (CDC/NIOSH) have resulted in the conclusion that there is no definitive link between *stachybotrys* exposure and any unusual illness. Although there are many isolated case reports of people suffering from various ailments purportedly linked to *stachybotrys*, the supporting evidence is inconclusive at this time.

In February, all four areas on the 5th floor were cleaned and reconstruction begun. A Certified Industrial Hygienist was hired by NAVSEA to take samples in the above-referenced areas. NAVSEA's contractor continued to take samples and work with the Occupational Health Physicians from the Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) Navy Branch Medial Clinic to determine the risks and success of the remediation actions. The last samples were taken on 26 February and indicated that the remediation was successful in the first, second and third areas. In the fourth area there was evidence of the presence of *stachybotrys* mold. The containment area will be reconstructed around the fourth area this week and the area will be re-cleaned. In the area of recently discovered mold on the first floor of Building 197, NAVSEA has taken action to ensure the mold is immediately removed, remediated and sampled, and the source of moisture corrected.

The areas have also been visited by NRL's Navy Branch Medial Clinic Occupational Health Physician, NRL's Navy Branch Medial Clinic Occupational Health Nurse, and the Head Physician of the National Naval Medical Center Occupational Health Division. It is recommended by these individuals, that even though the removal and containment should be sufficient to provide a safe workplace, any individuals with the following conditions may need to be relocated or otherwise accommodated until the remediation is complete:

- (1) immunosuppressed;
- (2) chronic respiratory disease;
- (3) allergy history;
- (4) recently recovering from a medical condition; or

(5) any other serious medical conditions.

Individuals who feel that they fall within one of these categories or have specific concerns may contact SEA 09A, OSH Office for more information or to arrange to speak with the occupational health physician.

Additional testing throughout the building will be conducted on a reoccurring basis to ensure there is no further growth of mold. If you observe any building material that is wet or water stained (such as dry wall, carpeting, ceiling tile, etc.) please notify 1 HELP or the SEA 09A OSH Office

You may contact the SEA 09A OSH Office at Phone 202-781-4225, e-mail at [safety09aoshnssc@navsea.navy.mil](mailto:safety09aoshnssc@navsea.navy.mil) or visit us in building 197 in room 1W1602.

We will keep you informed of the efforts to complete the remediation and our efforts to ensure that we provide a safe and healthful work environment for all of us.

Pete Brown